

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 /078 W

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R 261335Z APR 77

FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4448

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 1105

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, WB, US, UK, UR, FR, GW

SUBJECT: SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL'S COMMENTS ON BERLIN POLITICAL
SITUATION RAISE QUESTIONS CONCERNING PROPRIETY OF HIS
ACTIVITIES IN "POLITICAL" FIELD

1. SUMMARY: INTERNATIONAL HEALD TRIBUNE REPORTED
APRIL 19 THAT SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL BYKOV MADE INFORMAL
REMARK TO CDU BUNDESTAG DEPUTY ALOIS MERTES THAT "IT WOULD
BE EXTREMEELY DANGEROUS" WERE CDU TO COME TO POWER TO WEST
BERLIN. MERTES AND BERLIN POLITICIANS HAVE CRITICIZED
BYKOV FOR INVOLVING HIMSELF IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN
BERLIN. SOVIET CONSUL HAS SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED BYKOV-
MERTES EXCHANGE TO MISOFF, WHO TOLD SOVIETS THAT SUCH
STATEMENTS BETTER LEFT UNSAID. ALLIED MISSIONS AGREE THAT
DEFINITION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES IMPERMISSIBLE "POLITICAL
FUNCTIONS" BY SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL REMAINS DIFFICULT
TO DEFINE. END SUMMARY.

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2. IN ARTICLE APPEARING APRIL 19 INTERNATONAL HERALD
TRIBUNE CORRESPONDENT MURRAY SEEGER REPORTED THAT SOVIET
CONSUL GNERAL IN WEST BERLIN BYKOV AND SOVIET CONSUL
KOZOBRODOV TOLD CDU BUNDESTAG DEPUTY, ALOIS MERTES,
DURING RECEPTION HOSTED APRIL 18 BY ASPEN SINSTITUTE IN
WEST BERLIN, THAT IT WAS HIS "PERSONAL OPINION" THAT IT
WOULD BE "VERY DANGEROUS" WERE CDU TO COME TO POWER IN

WEST BERLIN. ACCORDING TO IHT ARTICLE, WHICH MERTES SUBSEQUENTLY CLAIMED WAS WRITTEN WITHOUT HIS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE, MERTES WARNED BYKOV THAT HIS STATEMENT SOUNDED LIKE A THREAT TO WEST BERLIN; HE CHARGED BYKOV HAD EXCEEDED HIS AREA OF COMPETENCE AS DEFINED IN THE QA BY ENGAGING IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. IHT ARTICLE ALSO GRATUITIOUSLY REPORTED FOR THE BENEFIT OF ITS READERS THAT "US SOURCES" HAD IDENTIFIED KOZOBRODOV AS THE KGB CHIEF IN WEST BERLIN. (COMMENT: MERTES GAVE SEEGER STORY. END COMMENT)

3. WEST BERLIN MEDIA WAS QUICK TO PICK UP IHT PIECE AS WAS THE FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE AND HAMBURG-BASED DIE WELT. WELT REPORTED WEST BERLIN CDU FLOOR LEADER HEINRICH LUMMER TO THE EFFECT THAT BYKOV, AS CONSUL GENERAL IN WEST BERLIN IS RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR "VODKA AND VISAS" AND SHOULD KEEP HIS NOSE OUT OF OTHER (POLITICAL) MATTERS. IN A COMMENTARY, WELT CORRESPONDENT FRIEDHELM KEMNA CRITICIZED BYKOV FOR INTERFERENCE IN BERLIN'S AFFAIRS, BUT THEN WONDERED WHAT BYKOV THOUGHT HE WAS TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH BY MAKING SUCH A STATEMENT TO A CDU BUNDESTAG DEPUTY.

4. AT OPENING OF ROMANIAN BOOK EXHIBIT APRIL 22 SOVIET CONSUL DMITRIYEV (BYKOV'S PRINCIPAL DEPUTY) RAISED SUBJECT OF IHT ARTICLE WITH MISOFF AND ASKED IF SOVIETS HAD US TO THANK FOR MYKOV-MERTES EXCHANGE HAVING MADE THE PRESS. MISOFF EXPRESSED WONDERMENT AT DMITRIYEV QUESTION ONLY TO ASKED HIS OPEINION OF SUBSTANCE OF WHAT HAD CONFIDENTIAL

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BEEN SAID. MISOFF REPLIED THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH BETTER IF BYKOV AND KOZOBRODOV HAD NEVER MADE STATEMENT AS IT WAS A WHOLLY INAPPROPRIATE REMARK. DMITRIYEV MADE NO EFFORT TO DENY ACCURACY OF PRESS REPORTS AND ARGUED ALLIES SHOULD NOT OBJECT TO "PRIVATE EXPRESSION OF OPEION" BY SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL, "ESPECIALLY SINCE REMARK WAS TRUE". DMITRIYEV THEN ASKED WHETHER ALLIES WOULD CONSIDER SAME REMARK TO BE OUT OF ORDER WERE IT MADE BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN EAST BERLIN, ABRASIMOV. MISOFF REPLIED THE REMARK WOULD BE IMPROPER NO MATTER WHO SAID IT BECUASE IT DID NOTHING TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION IN BERLIN AND ONLY SERVED TO HEIGHTEN TENSIONS HERE. AS MISOFF STUCK TO HIS POSITION THAT BYKOV REMARK HAD BEEN OUT OF ORDER, COSUL DMITRIYEV SOFTENED HIS LINE SOMEWHAT AND SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS THE EXCHANGE BETWEEN MERTES AND BYKOV AND KOZOBRODOV HAD NOT BEEN QUITE AS IT HAD BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS, AND THAT IN COURSE OF NORMAL CONVERSATION THE VIEWS WHICH BYKOV HAD EXPRESSED MIGHT HAVE BEEN DRAWN OUT OF HIM AND

SUBSEQUENTLY DISTORTED AND MISUNDERSTOOD. (COMMENT:
IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THERE WAS ANY MISUNDERSTANDING: WLT
REPORTED THAT BERTES WENT BACK TO KOZOBRODOV AFTER FIRST
CONVERSATION HAD BEEN CONCLUDED AND KOZOBRODOV REPEATED
POSITION TAKEN EARLIER BY BYKOV. END COMMENT.)

5. BYKOV, UNLIKE HIS PREDECESSOR SHARKOV, IS NOT A
PARTICULARLY "SMOOTH OPERATOR". HE IS, WE HAVE
OBSERVED OF LATE, RATHER INCLINED TO EXPRESS HIS "PRIVATE
OPINIONS" ABOUT A FAIRLY WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS AT COK-
TAIL PARTIES, AND WITH A BLUNTNESS WHICH OFTEN VERGES ON
OFFENSIVENESS. BYKOV'S STATEMENT TO MERTES WAS VERY
LIKELY CALCULATED WARNING THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT
WANT TO SEE THE CDU COME TO POWER IN WEST BERLIN. IN
SPEAKING WITH MISOFF ABOUT INCIDENT DMITRIYEV MADE IT
QUITE CLEAR SOVIETS PREFER TO SEE SPD GOV MAYOR SCHUETZ
STAY IN POWER IN WEST BERLIN BECAUSE THEY KNOW HIM
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AND HIS POLICIES; A CDU GOVERNMENT WOULD OFFER TOO MANY
UNCERTAINTIES. AT SAME TIME DMITRIYEV DOUBTED SCHUETZ
WOULD BE AROUND MUCH LONGER.

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6. BYKOV HAS MANAGED TO STIR UP ILL WILL AGAINST THE SOVIET CONSULATE GENERAL WHICH OTHERWISE TENDS TO ENJOY A GOOD IMAGE HERE. HE ALSO DID HIMSELF LITTLE GOOD, AND APPARENTLY REALIZES IT. BOTH HE AND KOZOBRODOV HAVE DROPPED OUT OF PUBLIC VIEW SINCE THE INCIDENT WAS REPORTED.

7. WE FIND MORE DISTURBING THAN BYKOV'S ACTUAL REMARKS, THE COMMENTS AND QUERIES PUT BY CONSUL DMITRIYEV. IT IS CLEAR SOVIETS ARE INTERESTED IN DETERMINING OUR REACTION TO BYKOV'S PARTICULAR INDISCRETION AND ALSO WHETHER WE CONSIDERED SUCH COMMENTS TO REPRESENT THE TYPE OF " POLITICAL FUNCTIONS" FORBIDDEN THE STAFF OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL BY THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT.

8. FIRST PARAGRAPH OF AGREED MINUTE II OF QA STATES AMONG OTHER THINGS: " THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL WILL BE OF A CONSULAR CHARACTER AND WILL NOT INCLUDE POLITICAL FUNCTIONS OR ANY MATTERS RELATED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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QUADRIPARTITE RIGHTS OR RESPONSIBILITIES." ALLIED MISSIONS HAVE REVIEWED INFORMALLY BYKOV STATEMENT AND HAVE FAILED TO REACH CONSENSUS WHETHER IT FALLS WITHIN PROSCRIBED ACTIVITIES OF CONSULATE GENERAL STAFF. WE OURSELVES HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ON THE ISSUE. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT PERMITTING BYKOV AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF TO GO AROUND TOWN EXPRESSING THEIR " PRIVATE OPINIONS" ON VARIOUS AND SUNDRY INTERNAL BERLIN ISSUES NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO QUADRIPARTITE MATTERS COULD CAUSE ALL SORTS OF MISCHIEF. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE SERIOUSLY QUESTION WHETHER ONE COULD CHARACTERIZE BYKOV'S STATEMENT AS REPRESENTING THE CARRYING OUT OF A " POLITICAL FUNCTION". (EVERYONE KNOWS, OR AT LEAST THINKS HE KNOWS WHAT A " POLITICAL FUNCTION" IS, BUT NO ONE HAS AS YET DEFINED THE TERM IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR CALLING THE SOVIETS TO TASK FOR HAVING TRANSGRESSED BEYOND THE LINE OF ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR). WE FIND OURSELVES, THUS, ONCE AGAIN LOOKING AT ONE OF THOSE LESS THAN CLEARLY DEFINED AREAS OF THE QA WHICH UNTIL NOW HAS NEVER BEEN TESTED ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.

9. FOR OUR PART WE FEEL IT BEST NOT TO TAKE FORMAL ACTION. INSTEAD WE RECOMMEND KEEPING A CLOSE EYE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL (BYKOV IN PARTICULAR) AND LET IT BE KNOWN IN A QUIET WAY, AS WAS DONE AT THE ROMANIAN BOOK EXHIBITION, THAT WE ARE

WATCHING AND DO NOT MUCH LIKE ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS
OF THIS SORT. SHOULD IT BECOME EVIDENT THAT THE CON-
SULATE GENERAL STAFF IS CONTINUING TO ENGAGE IN
QUASI-"POLITICAL" ACTIVITIES WE COULD CONSIDER COMPILING
AND PRESENTING A SHORT LIST OF SUCH TRANSGRESSIONS
WITH A VIEW OF MAKING A STRAIGHT-FORWARD COMPLAINT TO THE
SOVIET EMBASSY THAT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL
ARE EXCEEDING THE LIMITS ENVISIONED IN THE QA. IF THE ACTIVITIES
OF ONE OR MORE OF THE STAFF WERE THEN TO CONTINUE IN
SUCH A WAY AS TO APPEAR DETRIMENTAL TO OUR INTERESTS OR
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THE INTERESTS OF BERLIN WE COULD SPECIFICALLY WARN THE
INDIVIDUAL TO CEASE AND DESIST. OF COURSE, IN A
FLAGRANT CASE, WHICH WOULD GO WELL BEYOND THE PRESENT
INCIDENT, WE WOULD ALWAYS HAVE THE ULTIMATE WEAPON OF
DECLARING THE INDIVIDUAL SOVIET CONSULAR OFFICIAL
PERSONA NON GRATA.
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